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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 003035

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KPAL](#) [PREL](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN'S VIEWS IN ADVANCE OF THE SEPTEMBER 1-2  
FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GYMNICH)

REF: A. SECSTATE 153187

[1](#)B. MADRID 2609

Classified By: A/DCM Kathleen Fitzpatrick for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) Poloff discussed reftel talking points with Carlos Fernandez-Arias, MFA EU Policy Coordinator. He stressed that the Gymnich meeting is an informal gathering of Foreign Ministers in which the ministers are meant to speak freely, and therefore no talking points were being prepared for Minister Moratinos's participation. In terms of the agenda, Fernandez-Arias said the agenda points would be Enlargement (including Turkey and the Balkans), the Middle East (Gaza Disengagement), probably Iran, in view of recent developments there, perhaps Iraq, and one subject not mentioned in reftel: the UK's new proposal for an Arms Trade Treaty. He said there was no intent to discuss China or Venezuela.

#### Enlargement

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[1](#)2. (C) Fernandez-Arias said the most important topic of conversation will be the one on EU enlargement, particularly to Turkey. Spain has always been an advocate of EU membership for Turkey, and it strongly supports the October 3 start date for negotiations. He said that although for political reasons there is some hesitation to Turkish membership on the part of France, Germany and Austria, in his discussions with other EU diplomats, he had the impression that all countries would in the end agree that negotiations should begin on time. The GOS believes that Turkey should be given a "European perspective" on the way to move forward, and regardless of the obstacles to be tackled in the future, the negotiations should begin on October 3. (Note: In contrast to Fernandez-Arias's remarks before the July GAERC (reftel B), his comments now put Spain strongly behind the commencement of negotiations with Turkey. Post suspects this is related to Turkey's co-sponsorship of GOS's Alliance of Civilizations initiative.)

[1](#)3. (C) Fernandez-Arias also said that Spain was interested in giving this "European perspective" to the countries of the Western Balkans, including Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia. He mentioned that the EU should of course closely examine the qualifications of these countries, including their cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and counsel them on how to proceed. He also said that while some EU countries were pushing for certain Balkan countries to enter the EU before Turkey (such as Austria for Croatia), these questions should be tackled down the road.

#### Middle East

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[1](#)4. (C) Fernandez-Arias said that Spain was also pleased with how the disengagement in Gaza was proceeding, and they were obviously behind the UK's declaration on behalf of the European Union supporting the pull-out. He suspected that there would be discussion at the Gymnich on re-engagement in the Road Map in the Middle East, putting the two sides on track to achieve the vision of two states living side by side in peace. He said that Spain had proposed four projects in support of the Palestinian Authority within the framework of Envoy Wolfensohn's proposal, and that the Spanish fully intend to follow through on their pledge of \$40 million to the process, looking for ways to contribute to projects underway or new proposals.

#### Iran

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[1](#)5. (C) The GOS is very worried about developments in Iran, according to Fernandez-Arias, and the MFA expects Iran will be a topic of discussion in the Gymnich. He said that Spain hoped to get an update from the EU-3 at the meeting, and to discuss the various human rights and foreign policy declarations that Iran has made of late, including those having to do with its nuclear program. He said that strong action is warranted if Iran does not follow through with its commitments to the international community with regards to its nuclear program, but added that there are contradictory statements coming out of Iran right now, that Spain would like to clarify in the Newport meeting.

#### Iraq

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[1](#)6. (C) Fernandez-Arias was not certain that Iraq would be a topic of conversation at the Gymnich, saying that Spain plans

to follow through on its financial commitments for reconstruction and other (i.e. election) support in the country.

#### UK Arms Treaty Proposal

17. (C) Fernandez-Arias said the UK will also want to discuss Jack Straw's proposal for a treaty on arms trade. The GOS is anxious to hear from Straw his thinking behind the proposal and further details. While Spain is not a major exporter of arms, they do export, following the EU code of conduct on arms sales. Fernandez-Arias stated that Spain in general thinks the treaty idea is a good one, it would like more details on what the UK is proposing. The GOS is skeptical about the concept, he said. Fernandez-Arias noted that in this type of agreement, all parties would have to agree on the terms, and while developed nations might be in agreement on whom to sell arms to, developing countries either producing or reselling arms may not get on board, making the treaty essentially ineffective.

#### China and Venezuela

18. (C) Fernandez-Arias said that China and Venezuela were not on the Gymnich agenda, and that he expected that China would not be on the agenda for EU meetings during the UK presidency.

AGUIRRE